

REMARKS

Claims 1-12 are all the claims that have been examined. By this Amendment, Applicants cancel claim 2 and amend claims 1, 3, and 4. Hence, claims 1 and 3-12 are all the claims pending in the application. Claim 1 is the only independent claim.

Preliminary Matters

On April 24, 2008, Christopher Pfister and Dion Ferguson, # 59,561, conducted a telephone interview with Examiner Jessica Frantz regarding the present application. No agreement regarding the claims was reached. However, the Examiner suggested that the claims be amended to further define the structure and assembly of the apparatus.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

Claims 1, 2, 4 and 6-12

Claims 1, 2, 4 and 6-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Duff (U.S. Patent No. 5,868,175) in view of Hamasaki (EP 0987 439 A2) in view of Cametti (U.S. Patent No. 2,887,062) in view of Carey (U.S. Patent No. 6,020,667) and further in view of Sugino (U.S. Patent No. 5,590,732). Applicants respectfully traverse.

By this Amendment, Applicants amend claim 1 to further define the structure and assembly of the apparatus. Applicants respectfully submit that none of the cited references teach that “the first housing has first threaded portions each having a blind hole,” or “the control device is disposed between the first threaded portion and the second housing,” in combination with the other elements of the claim. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the rejection

of claim 1 be withdrawn, and further submit that claims 2, 4, and 6-12 are patentable at least by virtue of their dependencies from claim 1.

Claim 3

Claim 3 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Duff in view of Hamasaki in view of Cametti in view of Carey and further in view of Sugino.

The Examiner acknowledges that the five combined references do not teach or suggest the recitations regarding the clamp screws in claim 3, and contends that this feature represents a mere duplication of parts. Applicants respectfully submit that, as noted above, the multiple applied references fail to teach or suggest the features of claim 1 as amended. Therefore, Applicants submit that claim 3 is allowable at least by virtue of its dependency from claim 1. The rejection of claim 3 is respectfully requested to be withdrawn.

Claim 5

Claim 5 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Duff 5,868,175 in view of Hamasaki EP 0987 439 A2 in view of Cametti 2,887,062 in view of Carey 6,020,667 in view of Sugino 5,590,732 and further in view of Knife 4,324,532.

The Examiner acknowledges that the combination of the originally applied five references fails to teach or suggest a sealant coated on an abutment face between a first housing and a second housing, and on an abutment face between the first housing and the frame. The Examiner therefore cites Knife. Applicants respectfully submit that the application of Knife fails to cure the above-noted deficiencies of the originally applied references as asserted against claim

1 as currently amended. Therefore, Applicants submit that claim 5 is patentable over the applied art at least by virtue of its dependency upon claim 1.

Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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